

A FIELD GUIDE TO DOG CARE



Prepared by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Identification of Problems	3
Assembling First Aid Kit	4
Hot Weather Problems	6
Cold Weather Problems	7
Snakebite and Poisons	8
Diseases and Parasites	12
Threats from Other Animals	13
Leg-Hold Traps	15
Treatment for Shock	16
Emergency Treatment for Respiratory Problems	17
Emergency Treatment of Open Wounds	18
Rescue and Transport of Injured Animals	20
Conclusion	23

INTRODUCTION

This booklet is a guide to help you and your dog enjoy the great outdoors in Arizona. Whether you are a native or a newcomer, a novice pet owner or an experienced quail hunter who regularly shoots over his dogs, this booklet will help keep your dog out of trouble, rescue him if he gets in trouble, and treat him if he is injured or becomes ill.

A good portion of the information contained in this brochure is common sense. If you are aware of potential dangers and take care to avoid them, you — and your dog — can enjoy the Arizona outdoors without problems. However, problems can arise and it is important to know how to handle them if they do.



“YOUR BEST FRIEND”

IDENTIFICATION AND AVOIDANCE OF POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

Know your pet well. The better you know your animal, the more easily and quickly you will be able to recognize unusual behavior that is a sign of illness.

Keep your pet in good health. Visit a veterinarian regularly and keep your dog properly immunized against disease.

Be aware of the dangers that exist in Arizona's outdoors. The hot desert sun is as much a danger to your pet as to you. Remember, that unlike humans, dogs do not have the evaporative cooling system provided by perspiration. Carry sufficient water with you to avoid dehydrating your pet.

Be aware of dangers posed by wild animals, reptiles and amphibians, poisonous plants and sharp-spined cacti.

Also, be aware of man-made dangers. Though most animals are natural swimmers, steep banked canals are a danger that should not be ignored. Be aware of and take extra precautions in trapping areas (see section on leg-hold traps on page 15).

One final note of common sense. Always muzzle an injured animal before attempting to treat its wounds. Even a beloved pet can and will bite under the stress of pain and trauma (see section on restraint on page 20).

ASSEMBLING A FIRST AID KIT FOR DOGS

The first aid kit described here is a **basic** one. Drug and equipment needs may vary depending on the breed of dog. Consult your veterinarian for your animal's special needs and for advice on assembling your first aid kit.

The contents of this kit should provide material to help restrain a hysterical patient, and to treat major problems, including bleeding, wounds, shock, heatstroke, snakebite, poisoning, eye injuries, close encounters with cholla cactus, porcupines and skunks.

Be sure to keep the materials and medications fresh and restocked as you use them.

Contents for your Canine First Aid Kit

Materials and Equipment

Gauze bandages (1" and 2" rolls)

Gauge dressing pads 3" X 3" (8)

Adhesive tape 1" roll (1)

Cotton batting roll (1)

Triangular bandage (1)

Rectal thermometer (1)

Cotton swabs (6 to 12)

Tweezers

Needle-nose pliers

Sharp knife or razor blade

Suture gun (optional)

Commercial snakebite kit

Medications

3% hydrogen peroxide (2 oz.)

Milk of magnesia tablets, 5 gr. (10)

Activated charcoal tablets (20)

Koalin mixture (2 oz.)

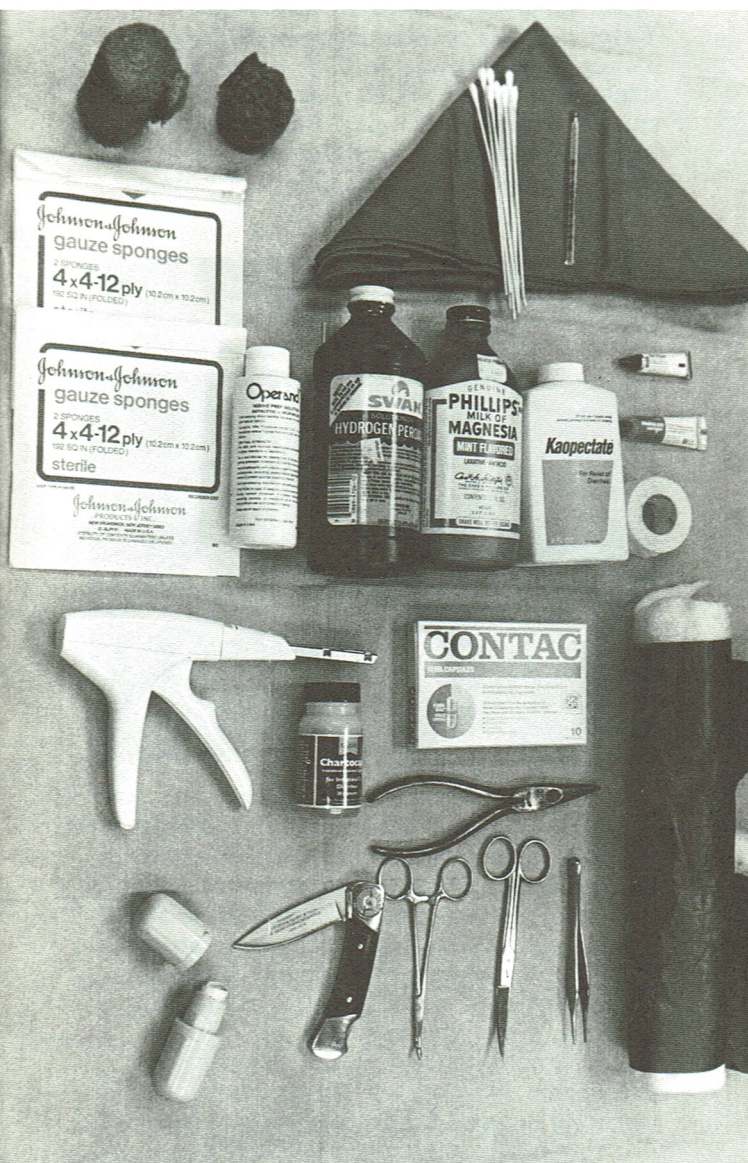
Iodine wound dressing

Antibacterial ointment

For eyes (1/8 oz. tube ophthalmic ointment)

For skin (1/8 oz. tube topical antibiotic ointment)

Antihistamines - i.e. Contac cold tablets - (6)



Canine first aid kit

HOT WEATHER PROBLEMS

Dehydration is a condition that occurs when an animal loses body water faster than it can replace it. Dogs do not perspire but lose water through panting. Normally, a 45-pound setter or pointer needs about a quart of water per day. Smaller dogs need less and larger dogs need more. A St. Bernard, for example, might need as much as three quarts, or more, each day. Excessive heat, or exertion, increases the water requirements. Make sure your dog gets plenty of water.



Probably the most life-threatening problem for dogs in Arizona is heatstroke. Heatstroke is a condition which occurs when an animal's body temperature control mechanisms are overloaded by environmental temperatures and humidity. Leave your dog in a closed vehicle for even a few minutes in the hot, desert sun and you lose your pet. The temperatures inside a closed car or camper can exceed 145 degrees. **Never leave animals (or children) unattended in a car parked in a sunny parking lot.**

Symptoms develop when an animal has been kept closed up in a car, pen, house or another closed area, without shade, adequate ventilation, or water, or when a dog overexerts itself in an environment that is too hot.

First Aid for Heatstroke

First, remove the animal from the hot environment and into a cooler, shady place. Soak the animal in cool water and/or place him in front of a fan. Allow the animal to drink small amounts of cool water. Give artificial respiration, if needed. Get the dog to a veterinarian for further treatment.

COLD WEATHER PROBLEMS

Most dogs are naturally well insulated and are able to withstand the cold weather extremes in Arizona. However, care should be taken with "house dogs" and dogs whose natural hair or fur has been groomed in such a way as to deprive it of its warming abilities (such as shaved poodles).

Frostbite and freezing may cause tissue damage when animals are exposed to abnormally low temperatures. Frostbite may occur in areas that are poorly protected by hair coat.

Symptoms

Skin may be pale. After thawing, skin may be red and scaly. Severe freezing may cause skin to peel.

First Aid for Frostbite

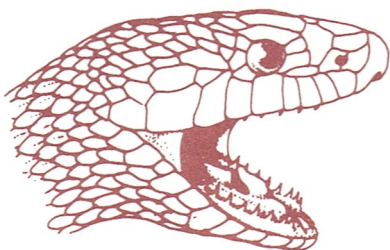
Rewarm affected areas rapidly, with moist packs or blow dryer. Heat should not exceed 102 degrees F. (39 Celsius). Do not overheat or rub tissues roughly. For severe freezing, rewarm animal in bath of hot water (102 - 105 degrees F., 39 - 41 degrees C.) to restore body heat rapidly. After rewarming, feed the patient a solution of warm milk or water containing 1/2 teaspoon of salt and 1/2 teaspoon of baking soda per quart of liquid. Dry animal gently with towels and blow dryer. Wrap in blankets. Treat for shock. See veterinarian for further treatment.

Snakebite and Poisons

Despite the large population of rattlesnakes in Arizona and the numbers of dogs in the field, snakebite is a fairly uncommon occurrence. However, it does happen, and it can be serious. Dogs can be trained to avoid snakes and many hunters find it a worthwhile investment to “snake break” their dogs. There are a number of individuals who specialize in this practice, which involves using an electroshock collar and a defanged rattlesnake to teach the dog to fear and avoid the sight, smell and sound of a rattler. You may want to invest in this training, particularly if you intend to hunt your dog where rattlesnakes are common.

Nonvenomous Snakes

Though venomous snakes are a greater threat, nonvenomous snakes can inflict painful wounds. Their bites leave tooth marks that may look like scratches or multiple fine punctures in the shape of an elongated U. Nonvenomous snakes have eyes with round pupils and do not have pits or indentations between the eyes and the nostrils as do pit vipers.

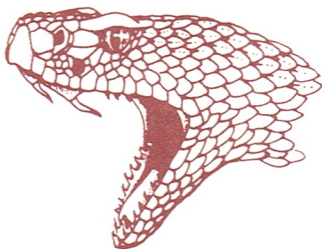


Nonvenomous snake has round pupils and rounded head.

Venomous Snakes

Venomous snakes native to Arizona include the rattlesnake and the diminutive coral snake. Coral snakes are rare and shy. They are usually too small to be a threat and cases of coral snakebite are virtually nonexistent. However, their venom is very potent. If you suspect that your dog has been bitten by a coral snake — identified by bright

red, black and yellow rings, with the red and yellow rings always adjoining — get the animal to a veterinarian immediately for antivenom treatment.



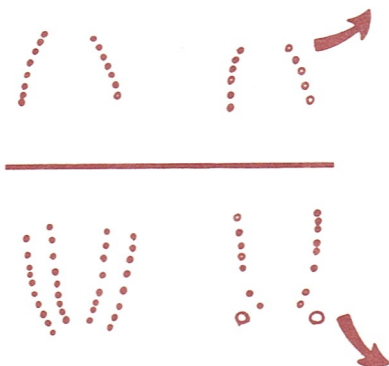
Venomous pit vipers have elliptical pupils, triangular heads, and retractable fangs.

Rattlesnakes are pit vipers — along with copperheads and cottonmouth moccasins, species not native to Arizona — and are easily identified by their large, triangular heads, thick, heavy bodies, and rattles. They have large fangs at the front of their upper jaws. Their bites leave distinct puncture wounds.

Symptoms

Snakebite usually causes acute pain immediately after the bite, followed by severe swelling and bloody fluid oozing from the wound. Weakness, difficult breathing, shock and even death can follow in a few hours.

Nonvenomous bite leaves multiple fine punctures that may look like scratches.



Twin deep puncture wounds are the “signature” of a pit viper bite; occasionally only one fang penetrates the skin.

First Aid for Snakebite

Muzzle dog. The best immediate first aid for snake bite may be a new commercial product called "the Extractor". Used within the first few minutes after a bite, the plunger-type tool can remove a great deal of the venom without cutting. If treating within one hour of bite, and bite is on leg, apply a constricting band between the swollen area and the body (but not on a joint) that is loose enough to slip one finger underneath. If severe symptoms develop, incisions and suction should be considered. **CAUTION: ANY CUT AND SUCK METHOD SHOULD ONLY BE USED AS A LAST RESORT. IT IS NOT RECOMMENDED.** Use a sharp sterilized blade and cut no deeper than 1/8 inch through the skin and no longer than 1/4 inch. cut along the axis (lengthwise) of the limb. Do not make cross cut incisions. Use suction cups provided in commercial snakebite kits for 30 minutes or more. Get the dog as fast as you can to a veterinarian.

Know that conditions exist for a dog to possibly be bitten by a snake. Before going afield, know where the nearest veterinary hospital or doctor is located. If your dog is bitten, the best treatment is from your car keys — that is getting medical treatment just as fast as possible.

Insect Bites and Stings

Bites and stings from bees, wasps, hornets and yellowjackets can be just as dangerous as snakebite. Repeated stings can cause an acute allergic reaction and have been known to cause death. Such stings usually produce a large, flat, swollen area or welt, which occurs suddenly and is very painful.

Black widow spiders, Arizona brown spiders and scorpions are also common in Arizona. Stings from spiders or scorpions usually produce painful local reactions, and may also produce generalized pain, nausea, chills, fever, cramps, and difficult breathing.

First Aid for Stings

Wash affected areas gently with soap and water. Wipe with alcohol and dry. Remove stinger if one is present. Apply cold compresses or wet compresses with sodium bicarbonate paste or commercial anti-itch lotions. Antihistamines, such as over-the-counter cold tablets like Contac₁ may alleviate symptoms.

For large dogs, dosage is 12 milligram tablet. Medium size dogs, 8 milligram tablet. Small dogs, one-half of an 8 milligram tablet. For more severe cases, see your veterinarian. If necessary, give artificial respiration.

Toad Poisoning

There are nine species of toads which are reported to produce poisoning in dogs. Some of these are found in Arizona. The toad's parotoid glands produce a potent toxin that produces severe symptoms when it contacts the mouth or eyes of a dog. The toxin may produce drooling, seizures, rapid heartbeat, rapid breathing. Death may occur if prompt treatment is not obtained.

First Aid for Toad Poisoning

Rinse the toxin from the mouth and eyes of dog with cool water. Use a hose if one is available. If the dog loses consciousness wrap it in a blanket to maintain body heat. Give artificial respiration if needed. Serious cases may need immediate veterinary treatment.

Other Poisons

Pets are a lot like children. They are naturally curious and commonly mouth or chew strange objects. If they find the taste appealing, they swallow all kinds of foreign and toxic materials. Each year, thousands of animals are accidentally — or purposely — poisoned. The list of common household products, medicines, and other items that are poisonous to pets is too long for inclusion here, as is the list of poisonous plants, both domestic and wild.

The common sense approach is to train your dog not to eat anything that you do not give him. This may sound impossible, but with patience and proper training techniques, it can be done.

Failing that, be watchful of any erratic behavior on the part of your pet. Signs of poisoning vary greatly. Things to watch for include material on the dog's mouth, coat or feet that could be toxic, an abnormal odor of the pet's breath or body, burns on the skin or mouth, and changes in bodily functions — such as vomiting or diarrhea, cramps or difficulty breathing.

If you suspect your pet has been poisoned, get it to a veterinary hospital at once. Treatments vary with the type of poison and are too numerous for inclusion here.

DISEASES AND PARASITES

An entire book could be written about canine diseases and parasites, and this booklet will not attempt to deal with the spectrum. Immunization against rabies, distemper, and parvovirus should be routine. Internal parasites, such as roundworms, hookworms, tapeworms and heartworms rarely cause emergencies and should be dealt with by your veterinarian. External parasites, such as ticks, lice, fleas and mange mites can be controlled with insecticides, administered by your vet.

A strong word of caution concerning one particular parasite. Fleas carrying bubonic plague are known to occur throughout northern Arizona, particularly in prairie dog colonies. While dogs are not particularly susceptible to the plague (coyotes are believed to be very resistant), they can host the infected fleas. The fleas can then infect the dog's human contacts. Precautions, such as flea collars and/or powders are recommended prior to taking to the field in northern Arizona.

THREATS FROM OTHER ANIMALS (AND PLANTS)

Arizona has a wide variety of native wildlife, some of which can be considered dangerous to your pet. These include black bear, coyotes, javelina, mountain lions, bobcats, badgers and foxes. "Close encounters" with most species are rare and easily avoided by maintaining control over your dog. However, in the case of an unusually aggressive wild animal, the possibility of rabies should be considered.

Two species that often present problems are skunks and porcupines. The major problem with skunks, other than the obvious, is that they are the major source of rabies. Again, keeping your dog's immunizations current is important.



Skunks

In the event your dog is "sprayed" by a skunk, flush his eyes with copious amounts of warm water then apply drops of warm olive oil to the eyeballs. The pungent skunk oil is a sticky, waxy oil that defies efforts to remove it completely, but there are a few tricks that will help. The best first treatment, to be used with caution and out of doors, is a petroleum solvent, such as "white gas" (unleaded gasoline marketed for camp-

stoves). Use a small cloth in the solvent to remove the musk from the animal. Rinse the cloth in the solvent frequently. Follow with a complete lathering with a mild moisturizing soap. Another "favorite" trick is to apply plain tomato juice and allow the juice to remain on the pet for several minutes. Then wash it off with soap and water. For a final rinse, prepare a solution of one tablespoon of household ammonia to two quarts of water. Be careful to keep this solution out of the animal's eyes, ears and other sensitive parts. Rinse off promptly with plain water. The animal may need daily baths in soap and water to further remove the scent. Eventually, the scent will fade away.

Porcupines

Porcupines have tough spinelike quills of varying lengths which completely cover their bodies, except for faces, feet and underbellies. They cannot "throw" their quills and if left alone are no threat. The problem is the natural curiosity of dogs, which may cause them to paw or sniff the "porky" they encounter. A "quick learner" will get a few quills and learn to leave the "pin cushion" alone. However, some dogs become aggressive, attacking the porcupine, despite the pain, and can be pierced by hundreds of quills. Severe cases should be taken to a veterinary hospital for treatment.

Cholla Cactus

Cholla cactus is the vegetable equivalent of the porcupine and is much more common in Arizona than the animal. Dogs may brush against the cactus or step on a fallen joint, then bite at the source of their pain. The result can be a mouthful of painful spines. Sometimes these spines, as with porcupine quills, may require anesthesia and surgical removal.

First Aid for Removal of Porcupine Quills and Cholla Spines

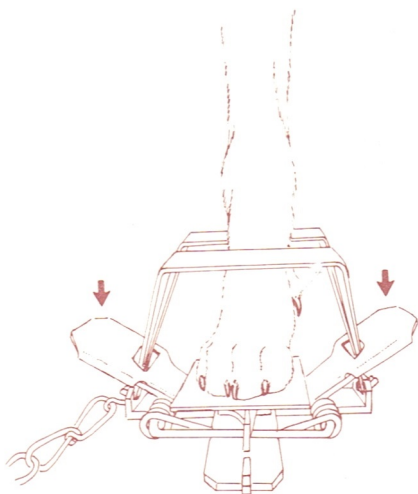
Muzzle the animal, unless the quills or spines are in the mouth. If that is the case, you'll need the assistance of a second person to restrain the animal's head while you remove the quills. In most cases, a pocket comb is the only tool needed to remove cholla joints, though a few spines may remain and require individual removal.

Use a surgical hemostat, needle-nosed pliers (or regular pliers if nothing better is available). To remove quills or spines, grasp each quill or spine firmly, near the skin, and with a firm, short pull, remove the quill. Do not pull at an angle, be sure to pull in the same direction as the long axis of the quill or spine to avoid breaking them off under the skin. Reassure the animal during the removal of the quills or spines with a gentle voice, repeating its name often.

Be firm, gentle and patient. Some of the cactus spines may be too small to detect, and you may not get them all, so observe your pet for infection for about a week after removal. If infection does develop, consult your veterinarian for possible antibiotic treatment.

LEG-HOLD TRAPS

Trapping is a legitimate use regulated by the Arizona Game & Fish Department, and trappers have the right to ply their trade on public lands. Unfortunately, any bait or scent



Depress springs by standing on places indicated by arrows. Jaws of trap will fall open and free the dog.

that successfully attracts furbearers to a trap will also attract dogs. When dogs investigate, they often spring the traps and are caught. Trapping season runs from the first of November to the end of February, roughly coinciding with the quail hunting season, so it behooves hunters to take extra care when hunting with dogs in trapping areas.

If your dog should become caught in a leg-hold trap, do not panic. Remain calm and remember that in nearly all cases, the trap will do no permanent harm to your dog. Talk quietly to your dog to reassure and calm it. Muzzle or restrain the dog, and if necessary, cover his eyes with a cloth, such as a shirt or coat, to calm him. Hold the dog steady and place your feet on the springs, releasing the tension and freeing your dog (see illustration on page 15).

Examine the dog to ensure there are not broken bones and treat the wound as you would any other wound. If your dog is more seriously injured, take it to a veterinarian for further treatment.

TREATMENT FOR SHOCK

Shock is a life-threatening condition that occurs when there is an interruption of the blood supply to the tissues of vital organs. Severe injury is the most common cause of shock in animals but there are a number of other possible causes, including poisoning, infection, massive bleeding and heart failure.

Symptoms include weakness, collapse, coma and unconsciousness, pale color of the mouth, lips and eyelids, coolness of the skin to touch, rapid heart rate, rapid breathing, and sunken, staring eyes.

First Aid for Shock

Eliminate the cause of shock. Maintain an open airway to ensure proper breathing. Give artificial respiration if necessary. Stop or control bleeding. Give cardiac massage if necessary. Restore body heat. Lower the patient's head, gently massage legs and muscles. Do not aggravate any injuries. Transport promptly to a veterinary hospital. If veterinary help is not available or too dis-

tant, administer fluids orally — 1 to 4 ounces of a tepid water solution containing 1/2 teaspoon of salt and 1/2 teaspoon of bicarbonate of soda per quart of water — every 30 minutes for a total of four or five doses. Do not give *anything* by mouth to a patient that is unconscious, in convulsions or vomiting. Keep the patient warm and still.

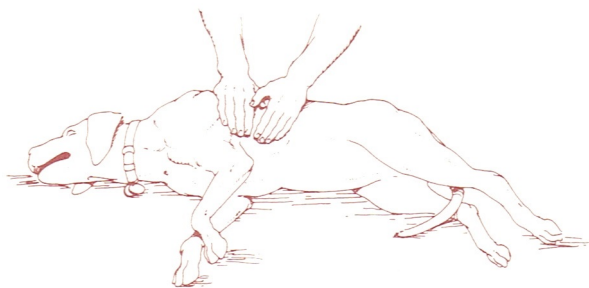
EMERGENCY TREATMENT OF RESPIRATORY PROBLEMS

Respiratory emergencies can be caused by a variety of reasons, including drowning, electrical shock, poisoning, smoke inhalation or injury. Symptoms may include slowed or stopped breathing, gasping, dark red or bluish lips and tongue, and unconsciousness.

First Aid for Respiratory Emergencies

Open the animal's mouth, grasp the tongue and pull it well forward. Keep it there and examine throat for obstructions. Remove any obstruction. Remove collar or any constricting item from dog. If the animal is a drowning victim, or has fluid in its throat, grasp the rear legs and hold upside down for 15 to 30 seconds.

Begin artificial respiration. Place the animal on its side on a firm surface. Extend the head and neck and pull tongue forward. Place both hands on the rib cage just behind the shoulder blade. With your hands, give a sudden, firm, downward thrust, and release immediately. Repeat about 12 times per minute.



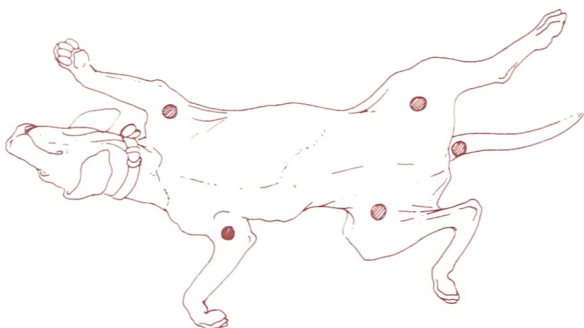
Place hands on rib cage, as indicated in illustration, and exert sudden, firm, downward pressure.

EMERGENCY TREATMENT OF OPEN WOUNDS

There are five types of open wounds: abrasions, incisions, lacerations, punctures and avulsions. Simply put, abrasions are scrapes, such as the skinned knees most of us experienced as children. Incisions are thin, clean cuts, such as a razor or knife might make. Lacerations are deep, irregular, jagged wounds such as might be caused by an animal's bite or by barbed wire. Punctures are wounds which pierce the skin, producing only a small hole but sometimes causing extensive internal damage. If you've ever stuck yourself with a needle or stepped on a nail, you've experienced a puncture wound. Avulsions are wounds that result from the forcible separation of tissue from the body. They are usually accompanied by extensive bleeding and since a large amount of tissue is exposed, severe contamination can be expected. Explosions, automobile accidents and gunshots are common causes of avulsions.

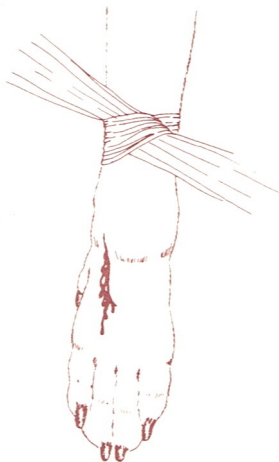
First Aid for Open Wounds

Remember that an injured animal is afraid and in pain. Treat your pet gently but firmly and carefully. Muzzle the patient first. Restrain by holding the animal on its side or by wrapping it in a blanket. Cover the patient's eyes, and speak calmly and quietly to reassure the animal, stroking its head gently and repeating the pet's name frequently.



Dots indicate position of pressure points. Apply pressure to stop bleeding below those points.

Act quickly. Severe bleeding can cause shock and death in a matter of minutes. Stop the bleeding by applying direct pressure to the wound with a sterile gauze pad or clean handkerchief. This method will stop the bleeding in most cases. Elevating the wound may be helpful if it is on a leg. If direct pressure does not stop the bleeding, pressure on the artery supplying the wounded part may be needed. There are five pressure points in dogs. They are located at the upper inside of each front leg, at the upper inside of each rear leg, and at the underside of the tail where it attaches to the body (see illustration). Pressure may be applied to any of these areas. The object is to compress the artery against the underlying bone. Always use the flat surface of the fingers, never the fingertips or thumbs. Use with direct pressure to the wound. Tourniquet is a dangerous technique and should be used only in a life-threatening situation as a last resort. If you do use a tourniquet, tighten it just enough to stop the bleeding and then leave it, and transport the patient immediately to a veterinary hospital.



Tourniquet should be snug enough to stop the bleeding but not tight enough to stop circulation.

RESCUE AND TRANSPORT OF INJURED ANIMALS

Generally speaking, dogs are less likely than humans to get themselves into situations that require rescue, but it does happen.

There are a few important principles to remember when attempting to rescue an animal. The first, and most important, is: **NEVER RISK HUMAN LIFE OR LIMB ON BEHALF OF ANIMALS.** Whenever possible, let professionals attempt the rescue. If you must attempt a rescue yourself, take time to plan the rescue. A few moments of thought and preparation may make all the difference in the world. Always keep in mind that even the most cherished pet, under stress and in pain, may bite.

Restraint

The muscles that close a dog's jaws are much more powerful than the ones that open the mouth, so not much force is required to keep the mouth closed. To muzzle a dog, use a length of heavy cord, bandage or cloth tape, (even a necktie can be an effective muzzle).



Traditional muzzle works well on long-muzzled dogs.

Loop it around the jaws, just behind the nose and tie it with a half hitch under the chin. Make additional turns around the jaws, then tie the ends behind the dog's ears in a firm bow knot. Dogs with short necks and faces require special muzzling. Fold a thick towel or other heavy cloth lengthwise and wrap it around the animal's neck. Hold the ends firmly behind the dog's head and ears. This heavy collar will keep the animal facing forward and restrain it from turning to bite you.



Restraint collar works best on short-muzzled dogs.

Transporting Injured Animals

How you transport an animal will depend on the size and temperament of the animal, the nature of its injuries, the condition of the animal and the distance to be traveled. Always muzzle the animal if it is conscious and capable of biting.

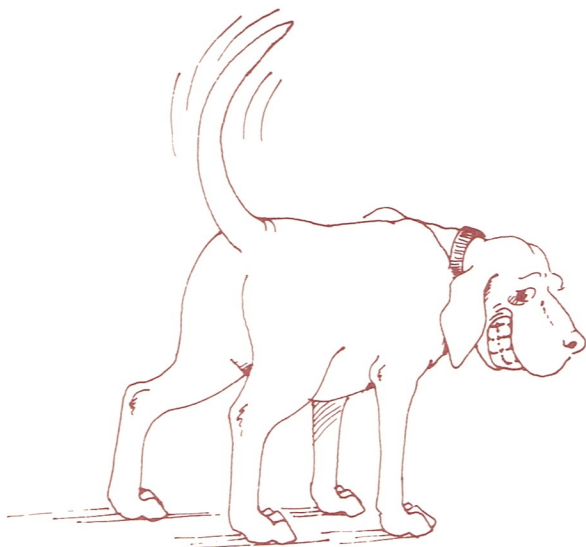


To drag injured dog, grasp gently by loose skin near head, keeping the body in a straight line.

If you must pull or drag the dog, grasp it gently by the skin at the top of the neck near the head and pull the animal head first, keeping the body in a straight line. If possible, slide the patient onto a board or blanket. Support any injured part carefully, and immobilize injured limbs with splints. Talk to your pet in calm, quiet, reassuring tones. Stroke gently and often. Keep your pet quiet, lying down, and warm.

CONCLUSION

Arizona's outdoors has a lot to offer you and your dog. Armed with knowledge and common sense, you and your pet can freely enjoy its pleasures and adventures in safety.



NOTES

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Your Veterinarian

Your Veterinary Hospital

Local Humane Society

Your Veterinary Association
